### Choice Making-Decision Making

Module 2

Transition Roundtables November 18 & 19, 2008

#### What's the difference?

- Decision-making skills are a broad set of skills that incorporate problem-solving.
- · What college do I want to attend?
- · Should I enlist in the military?
- Choice-making skills is a process to select one of several already identified solutions.
  - · What movie do you want to see tonight?
- · What shoes should I wear?

### The Decision-Making Process

- List relevant action alternatives
- Identify possible consequences of those actions
- Asses the probability of each consequence occurring (if the action were undertaken)
- Establish the relative importance (value or utility) of each consequence
- Integrate these values and probabilities to identify the most attractive course of action
- Modifying the goal
- Changing the instructional strategy used

#### Skills Needed:

- The student must be able to express his/her needs, desires, and preferences
- The student must have the ability to select among options

### How do we assess these skills?

- Identify the student's opportunity for making choices during the school day
- Does the student have access to opportunities to choose?
- · Handout: Choice-Making Opportunities
- Observe the choices the student makes during the day
- · Choice of social partner
- · Choice of free-time activity
- Evaluate the impact on the student of the ability to make choices
  - Is there a decrease in challenging behavior?
  - Does the student show increased motivation?

## Strategies to teach decision-making skills

- Instruction
  - Remember that these skills do not happen by chance.
  - Learning these skills is the result of purposeful strategies with prescriptive instruction
  - · Teach specific skills based on student's specific needs
- When developing instruction, the teacher must also consider structuring the learning environment to ensure opportunities for choice.

## Infusing choice-making into classroom instruction

- Incorporate student choice as an early step in the instructional process
- Increase the number of decisions related to a given activity which the student makes
- Increase the number of domains in which decisions are made
- Raise the significance in terms of risk and longterm consequences of the choices the student
- Clearly communicate with the student concerning areas of possible choice and the limits within which choice can be made

# Potential areas of choice within an activity

- · Choice of material
- > Choice among different activities
- > Choice to refuse to participate in an activity
- Choice of people to be included or excluded in an activity
- Choice of time an activity should occur
- · Choice to end a particular activity

- Handout: Potential Areas of Choice in an Activity
- Large group activity: Complete chart for either a job sampling opportunity or an academic class